THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI E. PONNUSWAMY): (a) Yes, Sir. A fire took place in the flare area of Mathura Refinery on 22.5.2000.

(b) Loss incurred due to the fire is Rs. 24.4 lakhs including cost of fire fighting materials amounting to Rs. 21.4 lakhs. There was no injury to any personnel due to this fire.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. There was some carry over/spillage of Naptha/FCC gasoline from sour water unit to flare area during unit startup activities which apparently caught fire.

All fire incidents are investigated by multi-disciplinary teams and remedial measures as recommended are implemented in a time bound manner.

Adequate measures are adopted for safety of the plant and operating personnel as per the prescribed Oil Industry Safety Directorate (OISD) standards.

Ban on Inter-State Movement of Petro-Products

879. SHRI RAMACHANDRAIAH RUMANDLA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have imposed ban on Inter-State movement of petro-products by the natural oil marketing companies;

(b) if so, the reasons for discrimination when private companies are facing no such restrictions; and

(c) the steps taken to allow movements of products by roads as all the States and the Union Territories do not have refineries or depots?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI E. PONNUSWAMY): (a) to (c) The oil marketing PSUs had been advised by the Ministry to stop inter-State supply of all petroleum products by road across State borders as sales tax evasion was being allegedly resorted to by some customers.

The Ministry and the oil companies received representations from different industries, industrial/commercial confederations/association and some Departments of Government of India. The Government have considered the representations and the oil marketing PSUs have been advised to restore Inter-State road supplies to all genuine customers which *inter-alia* include Export Oriented Units, Customers in Union Territories where oil companies have no

storage facilities and such customers are supplied from the nearest depot in the adjoining States. In addition Government consumers like Railways, Defence and Public Sector Undertakings like Steel, Coal Power etc. as well as Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)/Agreement customers have been exempted from the above restrictions.

Allocation of Kerosene to Low Volume Dealers

880. SHRI ABANI ROY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to refer to reply to Unstarred Question 1617 given in Rajya Sabha on 9th March, 2000 and state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the additional allocation of kerosene is given to low volume dealers to make them economically viable;

(b) how much additional quantity of kerosene has been allocated to Yamuna Nagar district and quantity allocated to low volume dealers;

(c) whether this additional allocation has been made to all the low volume dealers; and

(d) if not, the officers responsible who have given additional allocation to high volume dealers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI E. PONNUSWAMY): (a) The quota of kerosene to the dealers in a district is fixed by the oil companies/district authorities depending on the allocation made by the State Government to the district on a historical basis. Whenever any additional allocation of kerosene is made to the district, the endeavour is to allocate the additional quantity to the low-volume dealers who have not reached the ceiling of 250 KL per month.

(b) No additional quantity of kerosene was allocated to Yamuna Nagar district during 1999-2000 and April to June, 2000.

(c) and (d) Do not arise.

Extension to the Chairmen of HPCL and BPCL

881. SHRI ABANI ROY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the present Chairmen of HPCL and BPCL have completed their tenure and are on extension for three months;